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**A Norwegian Ramble. By One of the Ramblers.** xi and 232 pp. and 16 half-tone illustrations. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1904.

A book handsomely printed and convenient for the pocket. It takes the reader away from the beaten paths to the fiords and mountains of southwestern Norway, where the weary may find rest and recreation among innumerable waterfalls, lakes, and snow-crowned heights. The author shows, both with pen and picture, that this region offers extraordinary attractions, and he is very appreciative of the kindly, hospitable and honest folk living amid these surroundings. But if Nature is lavish of her beauty and grandeur, the soil is niggardly:

Every square yard of ground capable of producing grass is mown twice during the season and infinite care is taken in curing the crop. Everything else that can possibly be used for fodder is also saved with scrupulous economy. Thus the ash trees are shorn of all their lower leaves and branches and the potato tops, when they reach their full growth, are also cut, and both these and the ash leaves are dried upon the hurdles in the same manner as the grass.

**The Far Eastern Tropics. Studies in the Administration of Tropical Dependencies in the Far East. By Alleyne Ireland.** vii and 339 pp., Statistical and Biographical Appendices, Index and Map. Boston, Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1905.

Mr. Alleyne Ireland, who has been devoting himself to a study of the forms of government and the conditions of labour in the tropics, and who has already written several articles and at least one book on these general subjects, has now published this volume. He rightly lays much emphasis upon the climatic control of government in the tropics; in fact, his whole discussion may be said to rest upon climatic considerations. The mean annual isotherms of 68°, which are taken as the limits of the heat belt, bound the region in which Mr. Ireland sees a stationary civilization, and not a single contribution of first importance to art, literature, science, manufacture, or invention. The author notes that in early times man did progress within the tropics, but that the real advance has come under more harsh conditions in the so-called "temperate" zone. To quote:

The history of western civilization is the history of man's emancipation from the tyranny of his surroundings. That of tropical civilization is the record of his enslavement. The significance of this antithesis lies in the fact that, whereas in tropical civilization each succeeding nation, by building up a heritage of increasing weakness and dependence, wrote failure in ever-darkening letters across the page of history, each hour of western civilization marked some advance and yielded to man some new augmentation of his powers.

Mr. Ireland believes that the development of tropical peoples "has reached the limits imposed by inexorable natural laws"; that the greatest success in administering tropical possessions has been attained by those northern nations which realize that the natives of the tropics are and must remain dependent people, who cannot take a controlling part in government patterned after the forms familiar in extra-tropical countries. To expect that the natives of the tropics will become fit for self-government in the Western sense seems to Mr. Ireland "beyond any flight of an imagination which is checked by the smallest knowledge of tropical life."

Doubtless the very decided views taken by Mr. Ireland in his latest book will meet with severe criticism, and doubtless he goes too far in some things. But, on the other hand, climate is a natural control which is extremely powerful, and it is a control which few persons have so far thoroughly appreciated. For a temperate discussion of the influence of climate upon government reference may be made to a paper by Hon. James Bryce in *The Century* for March, 1899 (*British Experience in the Government of Colonies*).

R. DEC. W.